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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

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## *What It Is*

The National School Lunch Program helps provide wholesome, appetizing lunches to the Nation's school children every school day. These lunches make an important contribution to the good nutrition so vital to both mental and physical growth during a child's formative years. At the same time the program develops markets and increases consumption of farm products.

## *Who Operates It*

The National School Lunch Program is essentially a community effort. School authorities and interested local citizens operate lunchrooms in their community schools throughout the country. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service administers the program in cooperation with State departments of education. FNS specialists provide administrative and technical assistance to State personnel who in turn advise local managers operating the indi-

vidual school programs. The State departments of education enter into agreements with the schools for the operation of the programs.

The laws of nearly half of the States and Territories do not permit the State educational agency to administer the program in nonprofit private schools, and in those States such schools may enter into an agreement directly with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The National School Lunch Program is one of several inter-related activities of the USDA aimed at helping city people as well as farmers by trying to improve dietary levels and expand present and future markets for America's farm abundances.

### ***How It Started***

The first known school feeding operation in the United States began in 1853 and by the turn of the century several cities were operating "penny lunch programs" in elementary schools. It was not until the early 1930's that the Federal Government initiated a food assistance program to schools. This was the beginning of a chain of events which eventually led to the passage of the National School Lunch Act in 1946 and thereby established school food service as an integral part of the U.S. educational system. Specifically, the Congress declared that the objective of the 1946 National School Lunch Act is "to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children, and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food."

### ***Federal Assistance to the Program***

#### **Cash**

Federal funds for the National School Lunch Program are apportioned among the States to be used in reimbursing schools for part of the cost of the food they purchase. The amount of money each State receives is determined on the basis of two factors: (1) school lunch participation in the

State, and (2) per capita income for the State. Federal funds used in a State for reimbursing schools must be matched with funds from sources within the State . . . including State and locally appropriated funds, children's payments, donated goods and services, etc. . . . at the rate of three dollars for each Federal dollar.

## **Food**

Approximately 75 percent of the food used in the National School Lunch Program is purchased by participating schools on the local market. However, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is authorized by the Act to buy and distribute foods to schools participating in the National School Lunch Program. These foods generally include frozen and canned meat and poultry items and a variety of canned fruits and vegetables that are especially suited for children's lunches. In addition, foods acquired by the U.S. Department of Agriculture under its surplus-removal and price-support programs are generally available to all eligible nonprofit school lunch programs. The quantity of these foods schools may receive depends on the kinds and amounts in Government inventory and on whether they can be used effectively.

## ***Who Is Eligible***

All public and nonprofit private schools (such as parochial, sectarian, and denominational schools) of high school grade or under may apply for participation in the program. In order to be eligible for Federal aid schools must agree to:

Operate the lunch program on a nonprofit basis for all children regardless of race, color or national origin;

Serve nutritious lunches that meet the requirement for Type A lunches as established by the Secretary of Agriculture;

Provide lunches free or at a reduced price to children who are unable to pay the full price of the lunch based on the income poverty guideline prescribed by the Secretary.

Children receiving free or reduced-price lunches must not be so identified, nor otherwise discriminated against in any way.

### *The "Type A" Lunch*

A lunch based on the pattern listed below is known as a "Type A" lunch and is designed to meet one-third or more of the daily dietary allowances recommended by the National Research Council for a 10 to 12 year old child.

Lunches served under the National School Lunch Program, in order to be eligible for cash reimbursement, must contain as a minimum:

1. One-half pint of fluid whole milk as a beverage.
2. Two ounces (edible portion as served) of lean meat, poultry, or fish; or two ounces of cheese; or one egg; or one-half cup of cooked dry beans or peas; or four tablespoons of peanut butter; or an equivalent quantity of any combination of the above-listed foods. To be counted in meeting this requirement, these foods must be served in a main dish, or in a main dish and one other menu item.
3. A three-fourths cup serving consisting of two or more vegetables or fruits, or both. Full-strength vegetable or fruit juice may be counted to meet not more than one-fourth cup of this requirement.
4. One slice of whole-grain or enriched bread; or a serving of cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins, etc., made of whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.
5. One teaspoon of butter or fortified margarine.



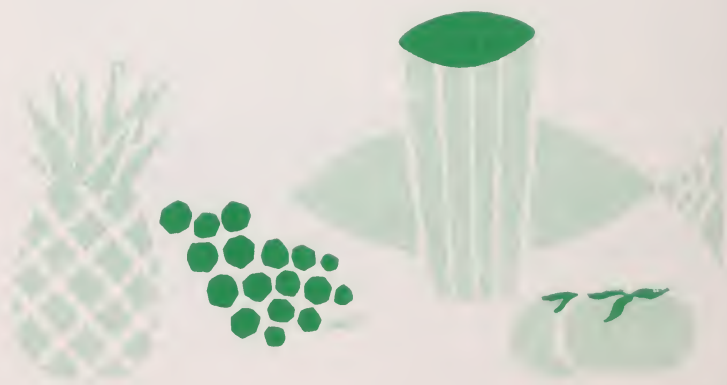


## *How To Get More Information*

While the National School Lunch Program is now available to a majority of children, it is not yet established in many schools and many areas where the need is greatest. Federal, State and local authorities stand ready to help communities and schools provide lunch service for all children. There is also help for schools wanting to start a breakfast service for their students, under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

For additional information on school feeding activities, public schools should write to the State educational agency in their capital city. Similarly, nonprofit private schools in the following States should contact the same agency:

Alaska	Minnesota
American Samoa	Mississippi
Arizona	Missouri
California	New Hampshire
Connecticut	New Mexico
Delaware	New York
District of Columbia	North Carolina
Florida	Oklahoma
Georgia	Oregon
Guam	Puerto Rico
Illinois	Rhode Island
Indiana	South Dakota
Kansas	Utah
Kentucky	Vermont
Louisiana	Virgin Islands
Maryland	Wyoming
Massachusetts	





The State educational agency is not permitted by law to administer the program in nonprofit private schools in the following States; therefore, such applicants should write to the appropriate USDA regional office as listed:

### **NORTHEAST:**

Maine	}	Regional Office
New Jersey		Food and Nutrition Service
Pennsylvania		U.S. Department of Agriculture
West Virginia		26 Federal Plaza New York, New York 10007

### **SOUTHEAST:**

Alabama	}	Regional Office
South Carolina		Food and Nutrition Service
Tennessee		U.S. Department of Agriculture
Virginia		1795 Peachtree Road, N.E. Atlanta, Georgia 30323

### **MIDWEST:**

Iowa	}	Regional Office
Michigan		Food and Nutrition Service
Nebraska		U.S. Department of Agriculture
North Dakota		536 South Clark Street
Ohio		Chicago, Illinois 60605
Wisconsin		

### **SOUTHWEST:**

Arkansas	}	Regional Office
Colorado		Food and Nutrition Service
Texas		U.S. Department of Agriculture
		500 South Ervay Street
		Dallas, Texas 75201

### **WESTERN:**

Hawaii	}	Regional Office
Idaho		Food and Nutrition Service
Montana		U.S. Department of Agriculture
Nevada		630 Sansome Street
Washington		San Francisco, California 94111

### *National School Lunch Week*

In order to gain recognition from citizens and civic groups for the work of the National School Lunch Program, the Congress, by a joint resolution, has designated the seven-day period beginning on the second Sunday of October in each year as National School Lunch Week, and has requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for the observance of that week.